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WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) is pleased to report that the U.S. Congress has appointed Dr. Katrina Lantos Swett as a new Commissioner.

“USCIRF welcomes Dr. Lantos Swett as our newest incoming Commissioner,” said [Leonard Leo](#), USCIRF chair. “I am confident that Dr. Swett will make significant contributions to our work on behalf of the cherished right of freedom of religion or belief and its fuller integration into U.S. foreign policy and national security.”

“Together with our current Commissioners, Azizah al-Hibri, William Shaw, Theodore Van Der Meid, Robert George, and Zuhdi Jasser, I also commend our departing colleagues, Don Argue, Felice Gaer, Richard Land, Elizabeth Prodromou and Nina Shea, for their years of committed service as USCIRF Commissioners. We are grateful for their powerful advocacy of religious freedom as humanity’s first freedom, and for their dedicated work in advancing USCIRF’s mission.”

The President and leadership of both political parties in the Senate and House of Representatives appoint USCIRF Commissioners. U.S. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid appointed Dr. Lantos Swett who will serve on the Commission, an independent, nine-member, bipartisan federal body that is principally responsible for reviewing the facts and circumstances of violations of religious freedom internationally and making policy recommendations to the President, Secretary of State, and Congress. On March 20, the Commission issued its 2012 annual report which recommended to the Secretary of State that the President designate 16 nations as “countries of particular concern” (CPCs) under the 1998 International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA).

Dr. Katrina Lantos Swett is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Lantos Foundation for Human Rights, which she founded in 2008 to carry on the human rights legacy of her father, the late Congressman Tom Lantos, the only Holocaust survivor ever elected to Congress. Dr. Lantos Swett teaches human rights and American foreign policy at Tufts University. She also served as Deputy Counsel to the Criminal Justice Subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee for then-Senator Joe Biden. She also has experience in broadcasting, where as the co-host of a political show, she interviewed major figures from across the nation and world. Dr. Lantos Swett also served as Director of the Graduate program in Public Policy at New England College and is a member of the Board of HRNK Human Rights in North Korea and the Tom Lantos Institute in Budapest. A graduate of Yale University, Dr. Lantos Swett earned her J.D. at the University of California, Hastings College of Law, and her Ph.D. in History from the University of Southern Denmark.

To interview a USCIRF Commissioner, contact Paul Liben at Pliben@uscirf.gov or (703) 870-6041.

